



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

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News Release

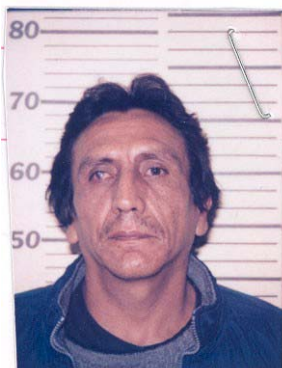
ICE ARRESTS 26 FUGITIVE ALIENS IN 5-STATE AREA DURING WEEK-LONG OPERATION

CHICAGO—A fugitive from Guatemala who was found in possession of a rifle and a shotgun is one of 26 fugitive aliens arrested following a week-long operation conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs (ICE) officers in the states of Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Kansas and Missouri.

Officers from ICE's Chicago Fugitive Operations Team arrested Angel Castro-Vasquez, 38, at his residence in Carthage, Mo., last Monday. ICE had information that Castro-Vasquez had obtained a hunting license and might be in possession of a firearm. It is a federal crime for an illegal alien to possess firearms. ICE officers encountered Castro-Vasquez Nov. 14 at home and found a shotgun and a rifle, along with ammunition, out in plain view. ICE seized the firearms and presented the case to the U.S. Attorney in the Western District of Missouri for prosecution. Castro-Vasquez was granted voluntary departure by an immigration judge in May 2004. His appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) was denied April 2005 and his failure to depart the U.S. rendered him a fugitive in August.



The operation, which began Nov. 14 and concluded Nov. 18, is part of ICE's national initiative to arrest and remove fugitive aliens hiding in the United States. These aliens have eluded law enforcement – in some cases for years – and pose a continuing threat to public safety.



Also arrested during the operation was Francisco Suarez-Aguilar, a 50-year-old Mexican national who was convicted in Cook County in Jan. 1995 of aggravated criminal sexual abuse in Cook County in Jan. 1995 for abusing his 7-year-old girl. Suarez-Aguilar had failed to maintain his sex offender registry and was living approximately one block from a child day-care facility when he was arrested at his home on the 3200 block of S. Keeler Ave. Suarez-Aguilar, a permanent resident, lost his permanent residency due to his criminal convictions and was ordered deported in 2003. His appeal was

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dismissed in 2005 and he was instructed to appear at the Chicago ICE office for removal August 30, an order that he defied.

In addition to the 26 fugitives arrested, ICE also took six illegal alien Mexican nationals into custody during the course of the operation for a total of 32 arrests. Of these 32 arrests, 29 are convicted criminals with prior convictions for sex offenses, weapons, drugs, DUI, and burglary. The fugitives arrested are from the following countries: Cambodia, Chad, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Lithuania, and Mexico. Twelve were deported to Mexico on Friday aboard a weekly government flight. The remainder are in ICE custody pending removal from the United States.

ICE was assisted in the operation by the Indiana State Police, the Indianapolis Police Department, and the Aurora (Ill.) Police Department.

ICE is making significant gains in apprehending fugitive aliens – individuals who were ordered deported from the U.S. and failed to surrender to the federal government, thereby becoming absconders.

“Keeping the American public safe by reducing the number of violent criminal aliens roaming our streets is a critical part of the ICE mission,” said ICE Field Office Director Debbie Achim. Achim oversees ICE’s Detention and Removal Operations program for the six-state area. “We are sending a clear message to those who choose to ignore our nation’s immigration laws that we will find them and remove them from the United States.”

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.